

How U. S. Information on Soviet Arms Buildup in Cuba Took Shape

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lights were only periodic, akin to spot checks.

Nothing turned up by the U-2s or by other means showed any heavy Soviet military involvement in Cuba until this July, when refugees began reporting the greatly stepped-up influx of Soviet military personnel. As the numbers grew, reports began to connect the presence of the Soviet new military activity.

In the weeks following these initial reports, increases in shipping from the Soviet block to Cuba were reported publicly by the U. S. These ships were tracked and photographed by U. S. intelligence personnel. However, nothing was produced from clandestine sources anywhere to say why the Soviet "technicians" were in Cuba or what these ships contained.

As indicated by some of the subsequently released photographs of such shipping, it is impossible to tell what was in the crates visible to the cameras. Some looked as though they contained aircraft or other military equipment. Although what Administration

officials called defensive weapons were determined to be on Cuban soil soon thereafter, there was still no evidence that "offensive" weapons had been introduced.

On Sept. 5 President Kennedy said in a statement that the Soviets had provided Cuba with a variety of missiles but that there was no evidence "of the presence of offensive ground-to-ground missiles; or of other significant offensive capability either in Cuban hands or under Soviet direction and guidance." The President appeared to have relied chiefly upon aerial photographs dated Aug. 29 which were released by the Defense Department this past Monday, although he had other sources of information.

These high-level photographs show no activity in areas of Cuba which subsequently became medium and intermediate range missile sites.

Significantly, Sept. 5—the day after the President's statement—was the last day on which U. S. intelligence got clear photographs of Soviet military efforts in Cuba until Oct. 14.

This is not to say that aerial reconnaissance was halted, merely that the results were limited. The high-flying U-2s had been operating for a long time on a pattern which took them over the same area at 2-week intervals.

Weather and an incident on the other side of the globe conspired to hamper effective reconnaissance. Excessive cloud cover and other atmospheric conditions resulted in not very useful photographs. Five days were excessively cloudy.

The incident on the other side of the world occurred on Sept. 9 when a U-2 flown by a Chinese Nationalist pilot was shot down over Red China. Since by this time it was in Washington, that



United Press International

Quits U. N. Post

Sir Hugh Foot relaxes for a moment en route home to England after resigning his post as United Kingdom delegate to the United Nations Trusteeship Council because of a policy difference with his government over the racial policies of Southern Rhodesia.

efforts were made to find out if the same type of weapon had downed the U-2 in China. This resulted in a few days' delay for the U-2s over Cuba, since they were not at this time allowed to fly within areas covered by the SAMS. However, they did fly elsewhere to cover Cuba.

This lack of adequate photography meant that Cuban refugee reports were for the period a major source of data, however unreliable.

Now it was late September. Some U. S. officials were getting rather nervous at the big increase in Soviet shipping to Cuba. But it was not until Sept. 28 that a photo taken at sea showed suspicious crates on a freighter's deck. The crates were suspected of containing frames for the Soviet-made IL-28, the twin-engine jet bomber never before seen in Cuba.

In early October, as the cloud cover began to break, the U-2s were able to get some photographs that showed activity on the Cuban landscape where there had been none before. But these pictures were inconclusive and further photography was halted for a few more days by Hurricane Ella.

It was at this time, too, that Sen. Keating first suggested that offensive weapons had arrived in Cuba. He hinted at this on Oct. 9 when he said: "No one knows exactly what the Cubans or Russians are going to do next. Perhaps they will begin setting up intermediate range missile bases."

Then, the following day, Keating took to the floor of the Senate and said flatly:

"Construction has begun on at least a half-dozen launching sites for intermediate-range tactical missiles. Intelligence authorities must have advised the President and top Government officials of this fact and they must have been told that ground-to-ground missiles can be operational from inland Cuba within six months."

It was on Oct. 15, it should now be recalled, that Secretary McNamara saw the photo which was the first hard evidence, a mobile medium-range missile base.

zle. One fact that U. S. intelligence had received, for example, was that the Soviets were checking out and surveying various sites in Cuba. Still, there was no hard evidence of an offensive weapons buildup.

The key photo was shown to President Kennedy at 9 a.m. Tuesday, Oct. 16. As he said in his address to the Nation on Oct. 22, "I directed that our surveillance be stepped up." It was stepped up by instituting low-level flights by Air Force planes.

The photos now began to pour in by the thousands. Hundreds of photo interpreters were put to work around the clock and the evidence soon became incontrovertible that the Soviet Union was moving with vast speed to create a major missile capability on the island.

The speed of the Soviet effort was so great that in retrospect U. S. officials believe that if the first work crew had been photographed the day it broke ground on the first base the United States would have had missile-base pictures only four or five days before it did.

To hard-working American intelligence, officials the outcome has been an intelligence triumph, not evidence of an intelligence gap—at least so

far as the aerial surveillance is concerned.

But admittedly there were gaps, especially in the long weeks while the Soviets loaded, shipped and unloaded the missiles.

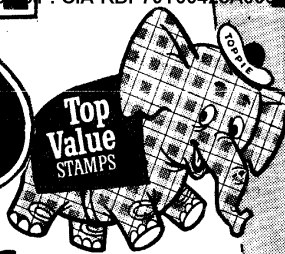
There is another factor, a psychological one. What Soviet Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev

tried was indeed a daring move, and at least some U. S. officials simply could not believe the refugee reports. But once there was in fact the first bit of hard evidence, the record bears out the contention that a massive and successful effort was made to get all the facts.

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A Chronology of Information on the Buildup

1 Nov 62

How Data on Cuba Took Shape

By Chalmers M. Roberts
and Howard Simons

Staff Reporters

Was the United States caught unaware by the Soviet offensive weapons buildup in Cuba? Was there a serious intelligence gap, as some Republican spokesmen are now charging?

The Kennedy Administration's position is that while Cuban refugees had for some time been reporting Soviet "missiles" on the island, it was not until 10 p. m. Monday, Oct. 15, that the first "hard" evidence, in the form of aerial photos taken by U. S. planes, reached Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara. The President saw the photographs Tuesday morning.

But what about the refugee reports? And what about the statements of Republican politicians before Oct. 15, espe-

cially those of Sen. Kenneth Keating (R-N. Y.), warning that missile sites were under construction? Were such unofficial reports ignored by the Administration, if indeed they were accurate before Oct. 15?

Thus far Keating has refused to reveal his sources, though he has claimed that they were "predominantly official" and that the same information was available to the Government. The Administra-

tion maintained that Keating was listening to often unreliable refugees. Some officials also suspect that Keating was tipped off to some of the earlier tentative intelligence estimates by persons in the Government pressing for action by the President.

But the Administration insists that during this period before Oct. 15 the President lacked the kind of evidence on which responsible policy could be based and on which a case could be made to the world.

The best way to tell what is now known is to do so chronologically. The Administration itself is preparing its own chronology for release shortly, but at present these are the facts as best they can be established:

In the last year of the Eisenhower Administration, after Fidel Castro had come to power President Eisenhower ordered reconnaissance flights over Cuba, presumably with U-2s. These

See BASES, A16. Col. 1

Bruce Released U.S. Photos of Cuba

By David Wise

Herald Tribune News Service

Secret aerial intelligence photographs of Soviet missiles in Cuba were released in London on Tuesday, Oct. 23, by U. S. Ambassador David K. E. Bruce after he had been urged to do so by Prime Minister Harold Macmillan.

When the pictures were released in Britain Oct. 23, before being made public in the United States, the impression was conveyed by the State Department that some minor official in the London Embassy had "misunderstood" his in-

structions and mistakenly released the photos.

On Monday, Oct. 22, Ambassador Bruce called on Macmillan in London and showed him the secret photographs and briefed the Prime Minister on the contents of the

speech that President Kennedy was to make to the Nation that night.

An informed Administration official said the British Prime Minister had urged Bruce to release the photographs to help convince British public

opinion of the soundness of the U. S. position.

Ambassador Bruce then proceeded to release the photographs, apparently acting on his own, feeling that the situation warranted his decision.

Word that the top-secret pic-

tures, taken by U-2 and other air force reconnaissance planes, were being shown on British television reached the White House late Tuesday and created a turmoil behind the scenes. At that time, American officials were weighing whether to release the photographs at all.

As a result of the London Embassy's action, presidential press secretary Pierre Salinger ordered the photographs released by the Pentagon, and 14 negatives were made public between midnight and 1 a. m. Wednesday.